

Zoom Family Service 15th November 2020

As we meet together by zoom, we hope you will find this service spiritually nourishing, and that you will feel yourself part of our local Christian community, even though we can't spend time physically in each other's company. Please join us in worshipping 'together' wherever you are this Sunday at 10 am. Today we celebrate the work of Children and Families ministry across the team.

For this service please have handy a candle, and something that represents the resources God has given you e.g. money, a diary/calendar, a gift or talent you have.

Welcome

If you have a candle at home, please light it now as we join together in worship

Greeting

We come from scattered lives to meet with God Let us recognise his presence with us, wherever we are. As a people we have gathered today to worship him together.

Brother, sister let me serve you
Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

2. We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

3. I will hold the Christ light for you
in the night time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

4. I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through.

5. When we sing to God in heaven,
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

6. Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

Invitation to Confession

Jesus said, "before you offer your gifts to God, go and make friends with one another." As brothers and sisters in God's family, we come together to ask God's forgiveness.

A time of silence

God our Father, full of grace and truth you create us from nothing and give us life: you make us your children in the water of baptism. We are sorry that we have sinned against you and against our neighbour by our wrong-doing, thinking and speaking. Father forgive us, and help us not to sin again, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Absolution

May the God of Love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins and assure us of his everlasting love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Reading Matthew 25 v 14-30 Parable of the talents

¹⁴ "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, ^(K) who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, ^[a] each according to his ability. ^(L) Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶ The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. ¹⁷ So also, the one with two bags of gold

gained two more. ¹⁸ But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

¹⁹ "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ^(M) ²⁰ The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.'

²¹ "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. ^(N) Come and share your master's happiness!'

²² "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'

²³ "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. ^(O) Come and share your master's happiness!'

²⁴ "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

²⁶ "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that

Creed

Let us declare our faith in God

**We believe in God the Father, from whom every family
in heaven and earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts
through faith and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen**

**Time of reflection - flickering candle slide (music
underneath?)**

Prayers

We come now before our
Father in heaven, in the power of the Spirit and in union
with Jesus, to bring our communities to God. We have
brought items that represent for us the resources you have
blest us with, maybe our skills, our time or our money.

**When I say: Lord, meet us in the silence
please will you respond: and hear our prayer.**

We thank you for all the good things we enjoy:

the beautiful world and all you have created:
the autumn colours and the changing seasons;
our friends and families, each one made in your image;
our church family and those who encourage us in faith
as we journey together

Lord, meet us in the silence ...and hear our prayer

We bring before you all that makes us feel sad or angry
injustice and inequality in our society.
people treating others badly or disrespectfully
division in our communities

Lord, meet us in the silence ...and hear our prayer

We bring before you the resources you have given to us:
our time
our skills
our money

Lord, meet us in the silence ...and hear our prayer

We realise that all we have comes from you, and we ask that you will show us how you want us to use what you have given us to bless our communities and bring hope. Please will you direct how we individually offer our time, our skills and our money so as a community we become more fruitful and we see your kingdom come.

We especially lift to you Heavenly Father the families who live in our villages. We thank you for all the relationships that we already have and ask for you to guide us as we

reach out in Your name. As we begin this new venture, we are confident that you have prepared the way, that you have gone before and we dedicate all those who will be giving their time, skills and money.

Lord, meet us in the silenceand hear our prayer

Merciful Father,

accept these prayers

for the sake of your Son,

our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever.

Amen

SONG

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcxOkht8w7c>

I the Lord of sea and sky

Verse 1

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin,
My hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Chorus

Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

Verse 2

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them,
they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak My word to them
Whom shall I send?

Chorus

Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

Verse 3

I, the Lord of wind and flame
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them,
My hand will save
Finest bread I will provide,
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give My life to them,
Whom shall I send?

Chorus

Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart

**All: Almighty God we thank you for the gift of your holy word. May it be a lantern to our feet, a light to our path, and a strength to our lives. Take us and use us in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the name of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

**The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all
evermore. Amen**

**The Children & Families Ministry short video can be
viewed on the church website**

www.stmaryslinton.org.uk

or

Script for Children and Families Ministry Video

Hi! In case you don't know me, my name is Sarah. I've been studying for the past two years to become a Children and Families Minister, and I was licensed on October 3rd to ministry at St Mary's.

Together, we've been on an exciting journey! Before the COVID restrictions many of you were on the team at Tots in Tow; you helped us welcome around 40-50 family members at the weekly Friday school service; you supported new parents at Baby Steps; or explored life's big questions with the Rooted community; at Messy Church you welcomed families with their messy lives for worship as a creative community. Where is God leading us next? My sense is that he's going to build on these foundations.

We are so blessed to live in a beautiful place! We are surrounded by the natural world, something we really appreciated during the Covid lockdown. However, our rural idyll hides an alarming secret. Although the Church Urban Fund has placed Linton in the top 6% of parishes across England for wealth, there are many in this community who

are struggling. At St Mary's, we recognise that our community includes other vulnerable people who are facing hard times, but today we are going to focus on families.

Families struggle financially for many reasons, but as we face a recession, we know that job losses will be a significant cause. Parents also struggle with isolation or illness affecting their well-being. We want to help families and children in Linton to thrive and grow, and together we can make a difference.

Jesus said a lot about caring for our neighbours and about feeding those who are hungry. As his people here in Linton, we have a responsibility to care for the vulnerable. 7.7% of children in the village, that means almost eight children in a hundred, live in income-deprived families, receiving State welfare benefits. They also qualify for a free school meal.

For some parents, the thirteen weeks of school holidays are a worry - not because they dread having the children to entertain but because they know that they won't be able to afford to feed everyone. Cuts to intervention services during the austerity years have had a huge impact on families 'just about managing'.

The worrying fact is that these families are hidden. It could be your neighbours or the family who pass your window on their way to school. Living in a village, poverty is not something people talk about. The Children's Society Good Childhood Report 2020 has shown evidence that rising rates of child poverty in this country may be playing a role in decreasing well-being of children.

Together we can make a difference. The vision is to start a lunch club to offer a free hot meal to families from February half-term 2021, and we're asking you now to take a share in making this vision happen. Please will you:

***Pray.** We know we are totally unable to make any of these dreams become reality in our own strength.*

*However, we believe God is already at work here and has been guiding us to embrace this vision. Please join us in a morning of prayer on **Saturday 5th December** when we can commit together to supporting children and families.*

And please will you:

***Give, if you possibly can.** The Covid-19 pandemic has had a dramatic effect on the economic situation, and the church finances have been hit too. We are applying for funding for our new project, but it is likely to be matched funding. This means if we raise £10,000, we will receive £10,000 more. We would like to be able to pay a children and families minister to lead the work. Please prayerfully ask God if he wants you to contribute, and speak to Sue Ellis or Suzanne Darkins for more information.*

God's love for all people is unconditional and immeasurable.

My passion is to show our neighbours in the Linton community by our care and service that they are loved by a Creator God, who made each of them a unique person, and that their life has purpose and meaning.

Thank you.

A copy of the leaflet explaining more can be found on the church website, or available from Sarah Thorne or the Church Administrator

